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background notes

Morocco

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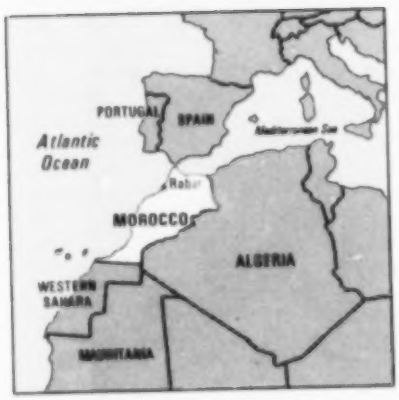

Official Name:
Kingdom of Morocco

PROFILE

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*—Moroccan(s). **Population** (1984): 22.8 million. **Annual growth rate** (1983): 2.6%. **Ethnic group:** 99.1% Arab-Berber. **Religions:** 99.97% Sunni Muslim; .03% Jewish and Christian (mostly foreign). **Languages:** Arabic (official), French, three Berber vernaculars. **Education:** *Years compulsory*—9. *Attendance* (1982)—63% primary, 28% secondary. *Literacy* (1982)—35%. **Health:** *Infant mortality rate* (1983)—98/1,000. *Life expectancy* (1983)—about 52 yrs. **Work force** (6.4 million, 1984): *Agriculture, livestock, fisheries*—50%. *Industry*—15%. *Trade, transport, and other services*—26%. *Other*—9%.

Geography

Area: 409,000 sq. km. (171,953 sq. mi.); about the size of Oregon and Washington combined. **Cities:** *Capital*—Rabat (pop. 900,000 in urban prefecture of Rabat-Sale). *Other cities*—Casablanca, Marrakech, Fez, Tangier. **Terrain:** Coastal plain, mountains, desert. **Climate:** Mediterranean and desert.

Government

Type: Constitutional monarchy. **Constitution:** March 10, 1972, revised. **Independence:** March 2, 1956.

Branches: *Executive*—King (chief of state), prime minister (head of government). *Legislative*—unicameral legislature (6-yr. term). *Judicial*—Supreme Court.

Administrative subdivisions: 42 provinces and 7 prefectures. The former Spanish Sahara has been divided into four provinces.

Political parties: Constitutional Union (UC), National Rally of Independents (RNI), Istiqlal (Independence) Party (PI), Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), Popular Movement (MP), National Democratic Party (PND), Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS—communist), Organization for Democratic and Popular Action (OADP). **Suffrage:** Universal over 20.

Central government budget (1985): $3.7 billion.

Defense (1985): 19.5% of central government budget.

Flag: 5-pointed green star centered on a red field.

Economy

GDP (1985): $12.6 billion. **Per capita GDP** (1985 est.): $600. **Avg. inflation rate** (1985): 7.7%.

Natural resources: Phosphates, iron, manganese, lead, cobalt, silver, copper, oilshale, fish

Agriculture (11% of GDP): *Products*—wheat, barley, citrus fruits, wine, vegetables, olives, livestock, fishing.

Industry (28% of GDP): *Types*—phosphate mining, manufacturing and handicrafts, construction and public works, energy.

Trade (1983): *Exports*—$2.2 billion (f.o.b.): phosphates, foodstuffs, manufacturing. *Major markets*—France, other EC countries, Spain. *Imports*—$3.8 billion (c.i.f.): machinery, foodstuffs, oil. *Major suppliers*—France, Saudi Arabia, US, EC countries.

Official exchange rate: 9.25 Dirham (Dh) = US$1 (avg. first quarter 1986), subject to fluctuation.

Fiscal year: Calendar year.

Membership in International Organizations

UN and some of its specialized and related agencies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF); Arab League, Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), INTELSAT, Nonaligned Movement. Morocco left the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1984.

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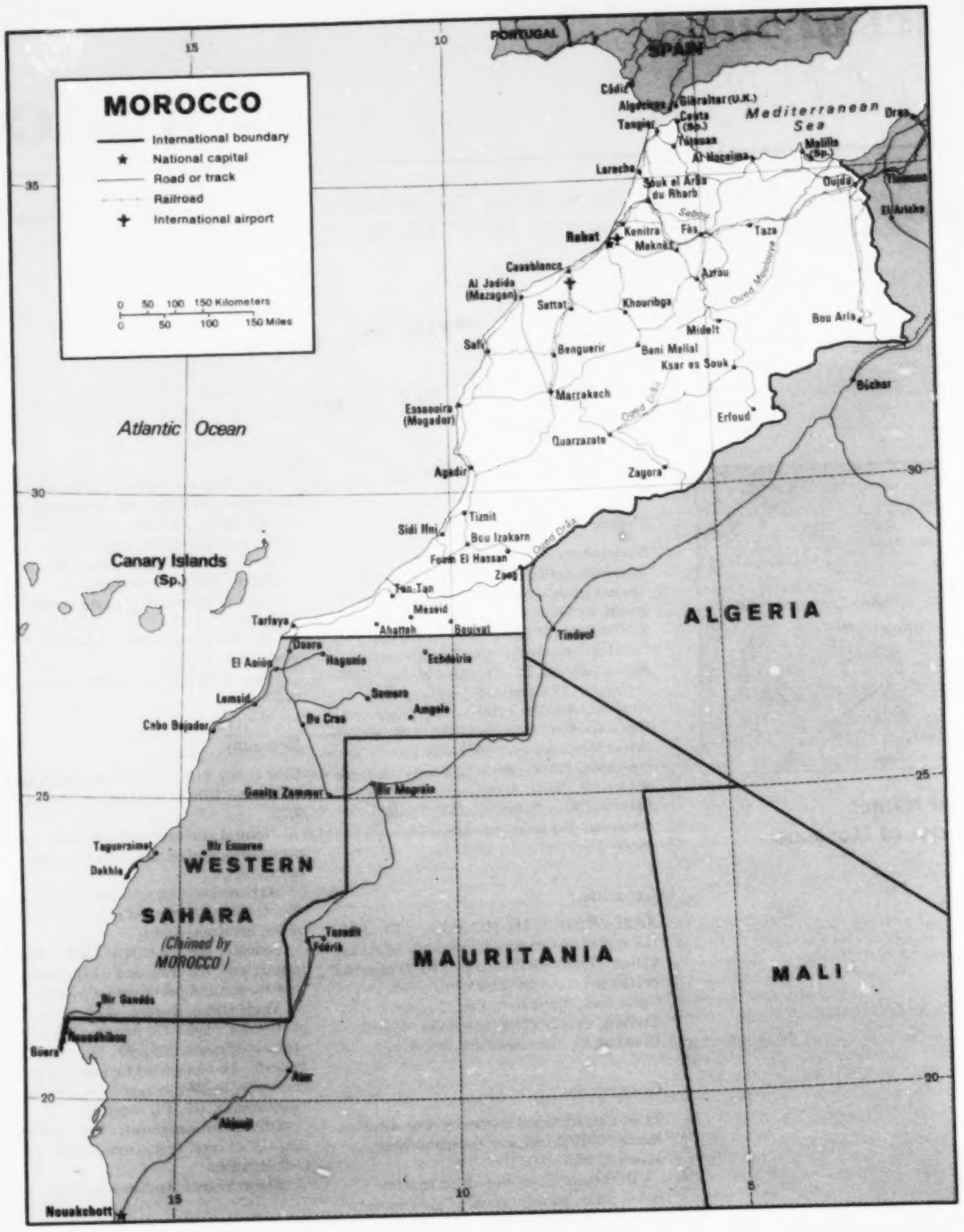
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Bu Craa
Guelta Zemmur
Bir Moghrein
Taguersimet
Bir Enzaran
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GEOGRAPHY

Morocco lies at the northwest corner of Africa, with only the Strait of Gibraltar separating it from Europe. Algeria borders Morocco on the east. Much of their common frontier is desert and has never been defined exactly, although in 1977 Morocco and Algeria signed a border agreement that has not yet been ratified by the Moroccan Parliament but is publicly acknowledged by King Hassan as definitive. Morocco's coast, extending nearly 1,950 kilometers (1,200 mi.) along the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, contains some of the world's richest fisheries. The phosphate-rich Western Sahara (the former Spanish Sahara), separates Morocco from Mauritania. Morocco claims this area as an integral part of the country. The United States recognizes only Moroccan administration over the area, considering that the issue of sovereignty over that region remains to be determined.

Topographically, Morocco is sharply divided into open, agriculturally rich plains in the northwest and economically poor mountains and plateaus in the east and south. The coastal plains and plateaus, fronting for 560 kilometers (350 mi.) on the Atlantic Ocean, are cut off from the interior by the encircling mountains. Peaks of the High and Middle Atlas ranges reach 4,150 meters (13,600 ft.) above sea level; peaks of the Rif Massif rise sharply from the coast to 2,150 meters (7,000 ft.) above sea level. The coastal plains are the most densely populated, most economically advanced, and most "Arab" part of the country. Most of Morocco's major cities are in this area.

Beyond the mountains, eastern Morocco is a series of arid, rolling plateaus forming a continuation of the Algerian high plateaus in the northeast and gradually dropping into the Sahara Desert in the south and southeast. Population here is sparse, concentrated in scattered oases along the Draa and Ziz Rivers. The oases have spawned many migrations across the mountains into inner Morocco, and several of the ruling dynasties rose from these migrations.

Morocco has been called "a cold country with a hot sun." The interior climate becomes progressively more extreme in temperature and in sudden variations. The mild, semitropical climate on the coast becomes a desert climate beyond the mountains. The desert blooms in March. April through October is usually dry.

View of the Qasbah du Sud.

PEOPLE

Most Moroccans are Sunni Muslims of Arab, Berber, or mixed Arab-Berber stock. The Arabs invaded Morocco in the 7th and 11th centuries and established their culture there. Morocco's Jewish minority numbers about 10,000. Most of the 100,000 foreign residents are French or Spanish; many are teachers or technicians.

Arabic is the official and principal language. French predominates as a second language, particularly in government and commerce, except in the northern zone, where Spanish is spoken. In rural areas, any of three Berber vernaculars—which are not mutually intelligible—are spoken.

Most people live west of the Atlas Mountains, a range which insulates the country from the Sahara Desert. Casablanca, with a population of 3.5 million, is the center of commerce and industry and the leading port; Rabat is the seat of government; Tangier is the gateway to Morocco from Spain and also a major port; "Arab" Fez is the cultural and religious center; and "Berber" Marrakech is a major tourist center.

Morocco's educational system has mushroomed since 1956. Education is free and compulsory through primary school. Education now surpasses national defense as the largest item in the government's budget—28%. Despite government allocations to education, population pressures and a shortage of teachers have strained the system.

Recently, the government began emphasizing vocational education. Of Morocco's several universities, the most important is Mohammed V University in Rabat. Its students—24,474 registered in 1983–84, including those from Africa and the Middle East—study medicine, law, liberal arts, and the sciences. Most university students benefit from government stipends. In Fez, Morocco's religious capital, students from around the world study Islamic law and theology at Karaouine University, which is more than 1,000 years old.

HISTORY

Morocco's strategic location has shaped its history. Beginning with the Phoenicians, many foreigners have come to this area, some to trade or settle, others as invaders sweeping the land and dominating it. Romans, Vandals, Visigoths, and Byzantine Greeks successively ruled the area. Arab forces began occupying Morocco in the seventh century A.D. bringing with them Arab civilization and Islam. Other invasions followed. The Alaouite dynasty, which has ruled Morocco since 1649, claims descent from the Prophet Mohammed.

Morocco's location and resources led to early competition among European powers in Africa, beginning with successful Portuguese efforts to control the Atlantic coast in the 15th century. France showed a strong interest in Morocco as early as 1830. Following recognition by the United Kingdom in 1904 of France's "sphere of influence" in Morocco, the Algeciras Conference (1906) formalized France's "special position" and entrusted policing of Morocco to France and Spain jointly. The Treaty of Fez (1912) made Morocco a protectorate of France. By the same treaty, Spain assumed the role of protecting power over the northern and southern (Saharan) zones.

The first nationalist political parties based their arguments for Moroccan independence on such World War II declarations as the Atlantic Charter. A manifesto of the Istiqlal (Independence) Party in 1944 was one of the earliest public demands for independence. That party subsequently provided most of the leadership for the nationalist movement.

France's exile of the highly respected Sultan Mohammed V in 1953 and his replacement by the unpopular Mohammed Ben Aarafa, whose reign was perceived as illegitimate, sparked active opposition to the French protectorate. France allowed Mohammed V to return in 1955; negotiations leading to independence began the following year.

The Kingdom of Morocco recovered its political independence from France on March 2, 1956. By agreements with Spain in 1956 and 1958, control over certain Spanish-ruled areas was restored. On October 29, 1956, the signing of the Tangier Protocol politically reintegrated the former international zone. Spain, however, retained control over the small enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in the north and the enclave of Ifni in the south. Ifni became part of Morocco in 1969.

After the death of his father, Mohammed V, King Hassan II succeeded to the throne on March 3, 1961. He recognized the Royal Charter proclaimed by his father on May 8, 1958, which outlined steps toward establishing a constitutional monarchy.

A constitution providing for representative government under a strong monarchy was approved by referendum on December 7, 1962. Elections were held in 1963. In June 1965, following student riots and civil unrest, the King invoked article 35 of the constitution and declared a "state of exception." He assumed all legislative and executive powers and named a new government not based on political parties.

In July 1970, King Hassan submitted to referendum a new constitution providing for an even stronger monarchy. Its approval and the subsequent elections formally ended the 1965 "state of exception."

A nearly successful coup on July 10, 1971, organized by senior military officers at Skhirat, was followed by Morocco's third constitution, approved by popular referendum in early 1972. The new constitution kept King Hassan's powers intact but enlarged from one-third to two-thirds the number of directly elected parliamentary representatives.

After a second coup attempt, in August 1972, by Moroccan Air Force dissidents and the King's powerful Interior Minister General Oufkir, relations between the opposition and the Crown deteriorated, and they could not agree on opposition participation in elections. The King subsequently appointed a series of nonpolitical cabinets responsible only to him.

Stemming from cooperation on the Sahara issue, a rapprochement between the King and the opposition began in mid-1974. This led to elections for local councils with opposition party participation on November 12, 1976. Parliamentary elections, deferred because of tensions with Spain and Algeria over the Sahara dispute, were held in June 1977, resulting in a two-thirds majority for the government-backed independent candidates and their allies, the Istiqlal and the Popular Movement.

A May 1980 referendum extended the Parliament's 4-year term to 6 years, changed the composition of the Regency Council, and lowered the King's majority from age 18 to age 16. Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed was 17 years old at the time of the referendum.

Local elections were again held in June 1983, and new parliamentary elections in 1984. A new party, the Constitutional Union, finished first in both votes.

GOVERNMENT

The King is chief of state, and his son, the Crown Prince, is heir apparent. Under the 1972 constitution, a prime minister appointed by the King is head of government. Of the 306-seat unicameral Parliament, two-thirds of the members are chosen directly by universal adult suffrage; the remaining one-third is indirectly elected by community councils and business, labor, and farmer groups.

The highest court in the independent judicial structure is the Supreme Court, the judges of which are appointed by the King. For administrative purposes, Morocco is divided into 42 provinces and 7 prefectures, 1 at Rabat and 6 at Casablanca. Each province is headed by a governor appointed by the King. Morocco has divided the former Spanish Sahara into four provinces.

Principal Government Officials

Chief of State—King Hassan II
Prime Minister—Mohamed Karim Lamrani
Deputy Prime Minister—Azeddine Laraki

Ministers
Justice—Moulay Moustapha Belarbi Alaoui
Interior—Driss Basri
Foreign Affairs and Cooperation—Abdellatif Filali
Finance—Mohamed Berrada
President of the Parliament—Ahmed Osman

Ambassador to the United States—Maati Jorio
Ambassador to the United Nations—Moulay Mehdi Alaoui

Morocco maintains an embassy in the United States at 1601 - 21st Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20009 (tel. 202-462-7979).

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Morocco has six principal political groups and two smaller ones.

• The largest is the center-rignt Constitutional Union Party (UC), which was founded in April 1983. Its president is former Prime Minister Maati Bouabid. It has 83 deputies in its parliamentary delegation. There are five UC members in the current Cabinet.

• The National Rally of Independents (RNI), the second largest parliamentary delegation, was founded in 1977 by then-Prime Minister Ahmed Osman, who continues to lead the party. Osman is also president of the Moroccan Parliament. Following partial elections in April 1986, the RNI delegation in Parliament totaled 62 deputies. The RNI, along with the UC, provides the government with a near-parliamentary majority in the legislature.

• The opposition is led by two of Morocco's traditional political parties, the Istiqlal Party (PI) and the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP). The Istiqlal, Morocco's oldest current political party, was founded in 1944 and helped lead the fight for independence from French and Spanish colonial domination. The party retains its strongly nationalistic philosophy and is also among the most active on pan-Arab issues. There are 42 Istiqlal representatives in Parliament. In May 1985, the party went into opposition when four Istiqlal Party representatives left the government.

• The Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) has, on the other hand, been in opposition for almost all its existence. The USFP split from the original left-of-center party, the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP), in 1974. The party is to the left of the Istiqlal, and its leaders present it as being in the tradition of the social democratic parties in Europe. Although it has only 37 representatives in Parliament, it is strong in urban centers, in the union sector, and among youth groups.

• The Berber-based Popular Movement (MP) is the third largest group in Parliament, with 49 representatives. Although in opposition—it left the government in April 1985—the MP tends to vote with the government on most major issues. The party's main issue is promotion and protection of the Berber roots of Moroccan society.

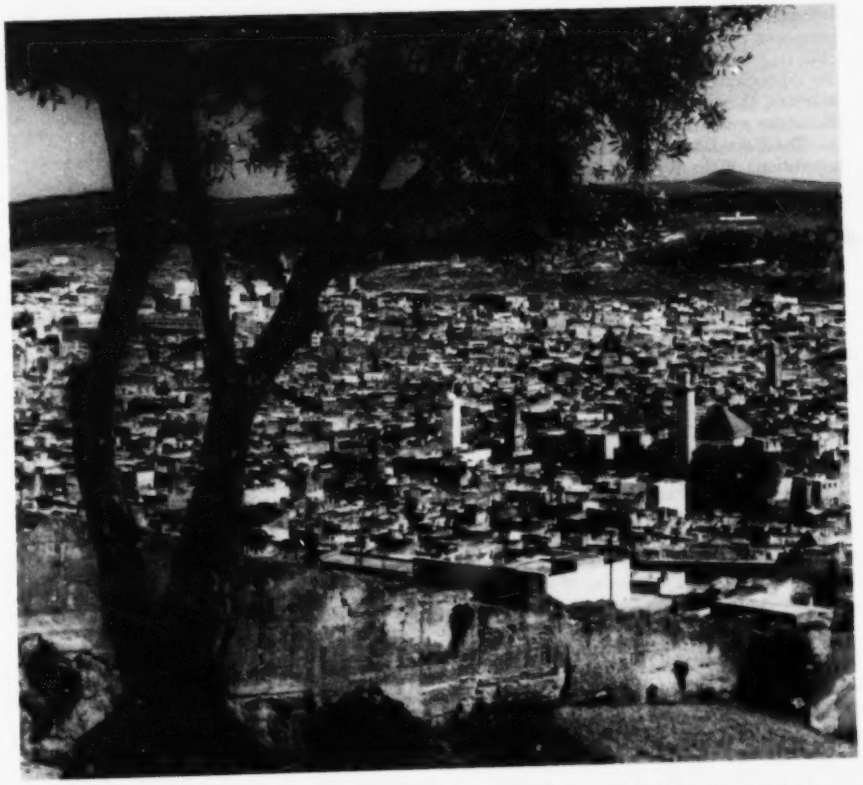
• The National Democratic Party (PND) was formed in 1981 when it broke off from the RNI. With 24 representatives in Parliament, it is the smallest of the major party representations. Led by former Cabinet member Arsalane El Jadidi, it is principally rural based.

• The Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) is the latest label for the small Moroccan communist party. Although tolerated, the party has been officially illegal at various times since its founding in 1943, the latest from 1969 to late 1974. The party bases its main support in urban areas and among younger, disaffected elements of society. It has two seats in Parliament and is led by Secretary General Ali Yata.

• The Organization for Democratic and Popular Action (OADP), with one deputy in Parliament, is the smallest of the active political formations. While adopting strongly leftist positions on most domestic issues, it, like all the other Moroccan parties, strongly supports the defense of Morocco's sovereignty over the Western Sahara. Party Secretary General Mohamed Ben Said leads the formation.

ECONOMY

Morocco is rich in human and natural resources and is beginning to develop a socioeconomic infrastructure. Like most other developing nations, it faces the challenge of translating these assets into economic growth commensurate with the needs of its poor and rapidly increasing population. The economy grew rapidly from 1967 to 1977, when real GDP (gross domestic product) growth averaged 6.5% a year. But beginning in 1978, a series of external shocks and a cycle of domestic drought revealed weaknesses in economic policies and structures. By 1983, the country was no longer able to service the heavy foreign debt (now over $13 billion or 110% of GDP), which had financed earlier growth. In 1983, the Moroccan Government responded with a broad program of austerity and reform to reestablish financial balance and put the economy into a sustainable, market-oriented growth path by the end of the



In Fez, Morocco's religious capital, students from around the world study Islamic law and theology at the 1,000-year-old Karaouine University and mosque. The old part of the city was founded in A.D. 808.

Western Sahara

The Western Sahara, scene of a decade-long conflict between the Polisario and Morocco, comprises 267,028 square kilometers (102,703 sq. mi.)—an area about the size of Colorado—of wasteland and desert, bordered on the north by Morocco, on the West by the Atlantic Ocean, on the east and south by Mauritania, and for a few kilometers on the east by Algeria. From 1904 until 1975, Spain occupied the entire territory, which is divided into a northern portion, the Saguia el Hamra, and the southern two-thirds, known as Rio de Oro. Calls for the decolonization of these territories began in the 1960s, first from the surrounding nations and then from the United Nations.

The discovery of phosphates in Bou Craa in the Saguia el Hamra heightened demands for Spanish withdrawal from the territory. Morocco's occupation after Spain's 1975 withdrawal has led to armed conflict between Morocco and the Polisario, an organization that had begun fighting from bases in the region of Tindouf, Algeria, since 1975.

Morocco's claim to sovereignty over the Western Sahara is based largely on the historical argument of traditional loyalty of the Saharan tribal leaders to the Moroccan Sultan as spiritual leader and ruler. The International Court of Justice, to which the issue was referred, delivered its opinion in 1975 that while historical ties exist between the inhabitants of the Western Sahara and Morocco, they are insufficient to establish Moroccan sovereignty.

The Polisario claims to represent the aspirations of the Western Saharan inhabitants for independence. Algeria claims none of the territory for itself but maintains that a popular referendum on self-determination should determine the territory's future status. In 1969, the Polisario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of the Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro) was formed to combat Spanish colonization. After the Spanish left and the Moroccans and, initially, the Mauritanians moved in, the Polisario turned its guerrilla operations against them.

In November 1975, 350,000 unarmed Moroccan citizens staged what came to be called the "Green March" into the Western Sahara. The march was designed to both demonstrate and strengthen Moroccan claims to the territory. On November 9, 1975, King Hassan requested that the marchers withdraw. On November 14, Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania announced a tripartite agreement for an interim administration under which Spain agreed to share administrative authority with Morocco and Mauritania, leaving aside the question of sovereignty. With the establishment of a Moroccan and Mauritanian presence throughout the territory, however, Spain's role in the administration of the Western Sahara ceased altogether. Mauritania withdrew from the territory in 1978 after several defeats by the Polisario.

Mauritania signed a peace treaty with the Polisario in Algiers in 1979 renouncing all claims and vacating the territory. Thereupon, Moroccan troops occupied the vacated region, and tribal leaders pledged allegiance to King Hassan. Later, local elections and the election of representatives to the National Assembly took place, and Morocco proclaimed the area reintegrated into Morocco. Morocco has since built fortifications which control about two-thirds of the Western Sahara and protect the economic and population centers, including the phosphate mine at Bou Craa.

Efforts to end the war continue. At the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit in June 1981, King Hassan announced his willingness to hold a referendum in the Western Sahara. He took this decision, he explained, in deference to African and other leaders who had urged him to permit a referendum as the accepted way to settle such issues. Subsequent meetings of an OAU Implementation Committee have proposed a ceasefire, a UN peacekeeping force, and an interim administration to assist with an OAU-UN-supervised referendum on the issue of independence or annexation. In 1984, the OAU seated a delegation of the Sahara Democratic Arab Republic (SDAR), the shadow government of the Polisario; consequently, Morocco withdrew from the OAU. UN resolutions on the Western Sahara have closely paralleled those of the OAU. Domestically, King Hassan's agreement in 1981 to hold a referendum evoked criticism from Morocco's socialist party, leading to the arrest and conviction at that time of USFP leaders for actions considered detrimental to national security and public order. In New York, the opening of indirect negotiations between Morocco and the Polisario in April 1986 gave new impetus to the possibility of a negotiated solution.

Morocco's decision to press its longstanding claim to the Western Sahara has complicated U.S. relations with Morocco and Algeria. From 1976 to 1978, Morocco's use of U.S.-supplied arms in the Western Saharan war brought official U.S. protests and a partial arms embargo. This injected tensions into bilateral relations, aggravated by congressional criticism of Morocco. When the Polisario launched attacks into Morocco in 1979, however, President Carter reviewed U.S. arms sales policy, and a decision was reached to permit the sale of arms "that could find use in the Western Sahara." Under the Reagan Administration, arms sales to Morocco have been approved to help maintain the military balance in the region. The United States has consistently supported efforts to end the war through negotiations between the concerned parties leading to a ceasefire and referendum. While recognizing Morocco's administrative control of the Western Sahara, the United States has not endorsed Morocco's claims of sovereignty there. It is the U.S. position that a political solution to the Western Sahara should take into account the views of its inhabitants.

decade. This has not produced as sharp a cut in growth rates (averaging 3% since 1981) as in many other heavily indebted developing nations but has required a difficult pause in improving living standards. How soon the economy returns to sustainable, balanced growth depends on both internal and external factors.

Although Morocco has rapidly urbanized and industrialized over the past 10 years (the population will soon be half urban and the primary sector accounts for less than 20% of GDP), agriculture remains the biggest single determinant of its economic health. In normal rain periods, Morocco's land, climate, and geographic setting give it a comparative advantage in cereals and fruit production. Forty-two percent of the work force is employed in agriculture (mostly in traditional subsistence farming); agro-industry produces close to a third of value-added output in the manufacturing sector; and the size of the domestic cereals crop in contrast to grain imports is a crucial factor in the trade balance. After a prolonged drought, rains in 1984–85 portend a bumper harvest in 1986, and, if they continue, could make tough financial and economic reforms more palatable. However, capitalizing on agricultural resources will also require completing major reorientation from irrigated to dryland farming and a broad set of technical and policy measures to improve agricultural productivity.

Morocco has few energy resources and has made a large investment since its independence to build a network of dams for both irrigation and generation of electricity. With normal rains, hydroelectric energy represents a major supplement—along with Morocco's single coal mine—to predominantly imported energy. Here, too, better rains—and the drop of international oil prices in 1986, if they persist—brighten Morocco's economic prospects for the late 1980s.

Morocco's richest natural resource is phosphate. It has three-quarters of the world's known phosphate reserves and is the world's third producer after the United States and the Soviet Union. Through major investments in mining and processing capacity over the past 15 years, Morocco has developed into the world's leading exporter of phosphate ore and phosphoric acids. Morocco's return on its investment here—meant to help absorb the trade deficit and serve as a pole of national development—depends on world demand and prices for phosphate-based fertilizers, which have grown only moderately since the boom-crash cycle of 1973–76.

Morocco's second biggest asset is its fisheries resource, especially off the

Western Sahara. The country has spent heavily in the public and private sectors to develop a 180-ship high seas fishing fleet and, more recently, the fishing port infrastructure to support that fleet. If Moroccan authorities can get the fleet to change its base of operations to Moroccan ports from the Canary Islands and ensure that licensed fishers and poachers do not exceed sustainable yields off the Western Sahara, then fisheries, over the long run, could rival the phosphate sector in export revenues and development impact.

Other crucial determinants of Morocco's external financial balance and development pace are its rapidly expanding tourism sector; remittances from its nearly 1 million emigrant workers, mostly in Europe; and Morocco's manufacturing sector, which is being pressured via trade liberalization to adjust from protected import substitution to a competitive export orientation.

The Moroccan Government's approach to managing these and other sectors of the economy has changed markedly since 1983 as a consequence of several factors. These include two cycles of debt rescheduling with the Paris Club of official creditors and the London Club of commercial banks; two standby agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which cover the years 1983-86; and a series of structural adjustment loans with the World Bank covering trade, industry, the financial sector, agriculture, education, and (still under negotiation) the public sector. The major principles of economic management that have emerged include fiscal restraint in the public sector, careful selection and prioritization of investment projects, increased reliance on private initiative as the motor of growth, and greater determination to ensure that the domestic economic environment is attractive to direct foreign investment.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Since Morocco attained independence, its foreign policy, officially attached to the principle of nonalignment, has been basically sympathetic to the West. Long-term goals are to strengthen its influence in the Arab world, Africa, and the Maghreb and to maintain its close relations with Europe and the United States.

The major issue in Morocco's foreign relations is its absorption of the Western Sahara, relinquished by Spain in February 1976. Morocco's decision to press its longstanding claim to the former Spanish Sahara when Spain withdrew has involved the country in a costly war against "Polisario" forces operating largely from Tindouf, a base in southern Algeria. King Hassan continues to support a ceasefire, neutral observers under UN auspices, and a referendum on the issue of annexation to Morocco or independence. While the United States—an arms supplier to Morocco for more than 20 years—has continued to help Morocco meet its defense needs against the Polisario, the United States seeks a negotiated settlement acceptable to the parties involved.

In 1984, Morocco signed a Treaty of Union with Libya, primarily aimed at ensuring a cessation of Libyan support for the Polisario. This has disturbed some of its traditional friends, including the United States. Morocco has described the union as a limited tactical alliance, and clauses of the Oujda Accord providing for coordination on issues of foreign policy and defense appear not to have been implemented. Following the U.S. challenges of Libya's claim to the Gulf of Sidra in January 1986, and its subsequent bombing of terrorist-associated targets in Tripoli and Benghazi in April 1986, King Hassan was among the few Arab leaders who did not criticize the United States for its actions; he showed balance and perspective on the worldwide terrorist threat. Morocco has long officially opposed terrorism and, at the August 1985 Extraordinary Arab League Summit meeting in Casablanca, King Hassan was instrumental in pressing for a declaration condemning international terrorism.

Tangier presents a charming mixture of Arabic, Berber, and European cultures.

Although Morocco signed a long-term development accord with the Soviet Union in 1978 for the exploitation of the Meskala phosphate deposit, which could eventually make the Soviet Union Morocco's biggest trade partner, its relations with Moscow are cool in large part because of Soviet arms sales to neighboring Algeria. Morocco persistently has expressed its concern over growing communist influence in Africa and has supported more moderate regimes in Africa. In addition, Morocco sponsored a resolution at the 1980 Islamic conference condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. King Hassan has been increasingly critical of the Soviets for allowing Soviet arms to reach the Polisario.

Morocco has sought to play a constructive role in the search for peace in the Middle East. Although King Hassan was an early supporter of Egyptian President Sadat's visit to Israel, Morocco and most other Arab countries denounced the Camp David accords. Morocco was a prime player in formulating the 1982 Fez Plan for the Middle East and its call for evacuation of all Arab lands occupied by Israel, including Jerusalem, and creation of a Palestinian state. King Hassan is Acting Chairman of the Arab League until the next regu-

Travel Notes

Climate and clothing: Morocco has wide daily variations in temperature. The coastal climate, though temperate, is damp. Wear clothing suitable for the eastern US.

Customs and currency: Passports are required. US tourists do not need visas for visits of 3 months or less. Dirhams may not be imported or exported. All currency or travelers checks must be declared upon entry.

Health: Though not meeting US standards, public health standards are improving steadily. When outside the large cities and resorts, carry water purification tablets or a supply of purified drinking water. Eat only carefully prepared fruits and vegetables.

Telecommunications: Local and international telephone and telegraph service is available. A working knowledge of French or Arabic is essential. Rabat is five standard time zones ahead of eastern standard time.

Transportation: Direct flights are available from New York. Adequate public transportation by air, rail, and bus is available among principal cities. The highway system is good, and directions are clearly marked.

lar Arab League summit, Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, which is charged with lobbying in Europe and the United States for the return of Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state, and Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. In late 1985–early 1986, Hassan called publicly, on three occasions, for an Arab-Israeli summit, with the Arab representative to be a chief of state designated by the Arab League.

With the exception of Algeria, Syria, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Morocco has traditionally enjoyed excellent relations with nearly all of the Arab world, especially Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Relations with Spain improved significantly following the Western Sahara agreement.

U.S.-MOROCCAN RELATIONS

Moroccans are proud to have recognized the Government of the United States in 1777. Formal U.S. relations with Morocco date to 1787, when the two nations negotiated a Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Renegotiated in 1836, it is still in force, constituting the longest unbroken treaty relationship in U.S. history.

U.S.-Moroccan relations are characterized by mutual respect and friendship. They were strengthened by King Hassan's visits to the United States in March 1963, February 1967, November 1978, and May and October 1982. Under the Reagan Administration, U.S.-Moroccan relations have entered a period of exceptionally close cooperation.

U.S. and Moroccan foreign policy objectives often coincide. Morocco's strategic location on the Strait of Gibraltar, its agreement to regular U.S. Navy ship visits, its persistent efforts to seek accommodation on Middle East issues, its religious tolerance and support of democratic institutions, and its forthright opposition to communist aggression are factors contributing to harmonious bilateral relations.

U.S. objectives with respect to Morocco include maintaining cordial and cooperative relations; supporting Moroccan efforts to develop an increasingly effective administration; and aiding its domestic, social, and economic progress. U.S. airbases in Morocco were withdrawn in December 1963 by mutual agreement, and the Kenitra naval facility was closed in 1978. But in addition to U.S. Navy port visits, Morocco has granted rights of transit through its airfields for U.S. forces and conducts joint exercises with various U.S. armed services. In addition, the United States is building a $175 million transmitter in Morocco. When complete, this will be the world's largest Voice of America transmitter.

Before 1956, U.S. aid to Morocco was channeled into development grants through the French administration. Since independence, more than $1 billion in U.S. grants and loans has gone directly to Morocco. Of this, 50% has been PL–480 loans; 40% support assistance, military grants and credits, and development loans; and 10% technical assistance.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) emphasizes programs to develop Moroccan agriculture and support capabilities and reduce its dependency on imports. For fiscal year 1986, a $19 million program is proposed, principally in agriculture, family planning, vocational education, and renewable energy development. About 110 Peace Corps volunteers are engaged in English-language training, rural sanitation, social work, vocational education, and fisheries projects. This is one of the Peace Corps' oldest and largest programs.

Principal U.S. Officials

Ambassador—Thomas A. Nassif
Minister-Counselor, Deputy Chief of Mission—Harmon E. Kirby
Director, AID Mission—Charles W. Johnson
Public Affairs Officer—Boulos Malik
Consul General, Casablanca—Richard L. Jackson
Consul General, Tangier—Stephanie Smith

The U.S. Embassy in Morocco is located at 2 Avenue de Marrakech, Rabat. (tel. 62265) ■

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